

USPS Report on PRC Rate and Service Inquiries for April 2012

The Postal Regulatory Commission referred 68 inquiries to the Postal Service in April.

Customers received responses on average within 13 days.

Inquiries covered various topics that fell into three main categories:

- Delivery services (50) – i.e., the time of delivery, forwarding, and method of delivery.
- Customer services (11) – i.e., hours of service, availability of retail products, and product tracking.
- Policies/procedures (7) – i.e., privacy and Freedom of Information Act requests, obtaining refunds or exchanging postage, and suggestions.

While many of the inquiries were customer specific, the following topics are being highlighted for their possible interest to a larger audience.

Dog Bite Prevention Week

Nationwide last year, 5,669 postal employees were attacked in more than 1,400 cities, yet that pales in comparison to the 4.7 million Americans bitten annually — the majority of whom are children.

These statistics are part of the reason the Postal Service recognizes National Dog Bite Prevention Week, May 19-25. The annual event provides dog attack prevention tips and information on responsible pet ownership.

Beyond the needless pain and suffering, medical expenses from dog attacks cost the Postal Service nearly \$1.2 million last year. According to the Insurance Information Institute, dog attacks accounted for more than one-third of all homeowners' insurance liability claims paid out in 2010, costing nearly \$413 million.

How to Avoid Being Bitten

- Don't run past a dog. The dog's natural instinct is to chase and catch you.
- If a dog threatens you, don't scream. Avoid eye contact. Try to remain motionless until the dog leaves, then back away slowly until the dog is out of sight.
- Don't approach a strange dog, especially one that's tethered or confined.
- People choosing to pet dogs should obtain permission from the owner first and always let a dog see and sniff them before petting the animal.
- If you believe a dog is about to attack you, try to place something between yourself and the dog, such as a satchel, backpack or a bicycle.

How to Be a Responsible Dog Owner

- Obedience training can teach dogs proper behavior and help owners control their dogs.
- When a carrier comes to your home, keep your dog inside, away from the door in another room.

- Dogs can be protective of their territory and may interpret the actions of letter carriers as a threat. Please take precautions when accepting mail in the presence of your pet.
- Spay or neuter your dog. Neutered dogs are less likely to roam and bite.
- Dogs that receive little attention or handling, or are left tied up for long periods of time, frequently turn into biters.

Loose Dogs Halt Delivery, Possibly Cause Trauma

The Postal Service places the safety of its employees as a top priority. Letter carriers fearing for their safety due to a loose or unrestrained pet may curtail delivery and ask homeowners to pick up their mail at the Post Office until the carrier is assured the pet is restrained. In cases where a carrier sees a dog roaming and can't determine where it resides, delivery could be curtailed to the entire neighborhood.